

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 2, 2009

The Honorable Alan Mollohan
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science
Science
and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Wolf
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Wolf:

We are writing to convey our support for the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) at the Department of Commerce and to respectfully request that your subcommittee include \$44 million in FY 2010 for this program.

For some four decades, PTFP has served as a critical infrastructure program which helped build a public broadcasting system of radio and television stations that reaches more than 95 percent of America's population. Today, PTFP is the only federal funding program to preserve America's media system and to maintain its infrastructure of transmitters, translators, towers, antennas and other vital content delivery equipment.

PTFP has been drastically under-funded the past several years. Since suffering an 18% cut in FY 2002 and FY 2003 compounded with an additional 50% cut in FY 2004 and subsequent cuts in the following years, PTFP has forgone \$270 million in federal funds during the past eight years and has been unable to keep pace with the essential infrastructure needs of public broadcasting. These cuts have directly resulted in a growing backlog of needed projects, with applications to the program outnumbering grants 2 to 1 in the last several years. Funding at \$44 million for FY 2010 would restore the program to pre-2004 levels. Like all infrastructure projects, the costs and risks of failed service exponentially rise each year that vital projects are left unfunded.

Because of PTFP, nearly every U.S. household has access to the reliable quality of educational, cultural and public affairs programming offered by their local public television and radio stations—regardless of where those households are located. PTFP has made it possible for public television and radio stations to bring their services to the most remote corners of this country from Native American reservations to small rural communities and areas that have no access to cable or other broadcasters. PTFP makes it possible for people that cannot afford to pay for cable or satellite to have continued access to quality programming that educates their families, enlightens their lives and allows them to explore the world. PTFP also gives the necessary support for stations to provide the millions of people who are hearing and visually impaired with radio and television captioned services and reading programs.

PTFP's preservation role is often its most important because it is the only source of federal emergency funds for public radio and television stations in the event of an emergency for instance, loss of a transmitter or other critical equipment due to natural disasters like floods,

hurricanes, wildfires. Following hurricanes Katrina and Rita, several stations in the Gulf region were awarded PTFP emergency grants. Without PTFP funds, many of these communities would be vulnerable to the compounded effect of losing local news, educational and cultural programming offered by their public television and radio stations.

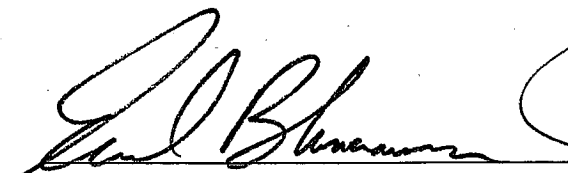
On average, stations leverage PTFP funding to locally raise an additional 50 percent of infrastructure and maintenance costs—resulting in a very successful public private partnership committed to protecting one of this nation's most valued resources. Moreover, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) opened a filing window in 2007 for non-commercial educational radio stations, the first such frequency filing opportunity in more than 7 years. Several hundred applications from public radio stations were filed for new frequencies to improve or provide first service for communities across America. Each of these new frequencies, once approved by the FCC, will require a build-out, adding to the vitally important matching grant financing provided by PTFP.

As public broadcasters move into the digital era, PTFP has played an essential role in helping stations make the difficult and costly conversion from analog to digital. But the need for PTFP will not disappear once the transition is complete. Just as PTFP has provided an invaluable resource to stations over the years as analog equipment needed replacements or upgrades, PTFP funding will be essential to stations that need assistance in maintaining reliable digital service that meets the needs of their communities.

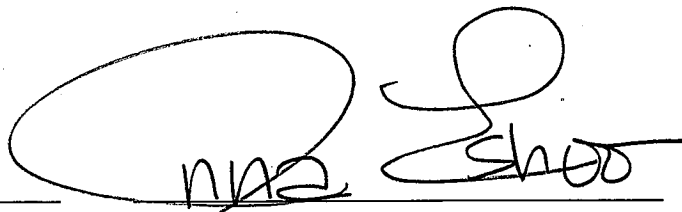
PTFP funding is about more than towers and antennas. Ultimately, adequate PTFP funding ensures that all Americans have access to the highest quality local, educational, and cultural programming and services that are delivered to communities nationwide by America's public broadcasters. As some of the last locally owned and operated media outlets in the country, PTFP is a critical resource for stations as they seek to share with their communities the breadth and depth of public broadcasting services from early childhood literacy, workforce training, public affairs, cultural programming and emergency services.

We believe Congress should renew its commitment to PTFP to ensure public broadcasting will continue to thrive and we ask that your subcommittee approve this request of \$44 million in FY 2010 for PTFP.

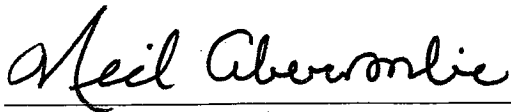
Sincerely,



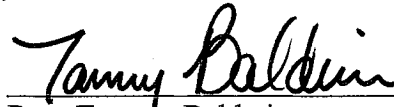
Rep. Earl Blumenauer



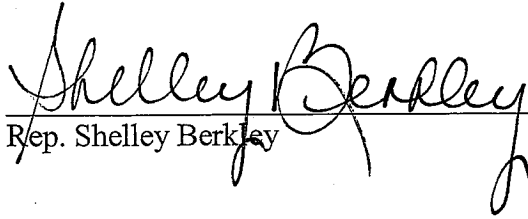
Rep. Anna Eshoo



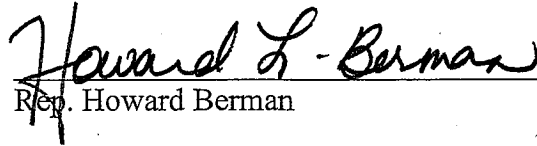
Rep. Neil Abercrombie



Rep. Tammy Baldwin



Rep. Shelley Berkley



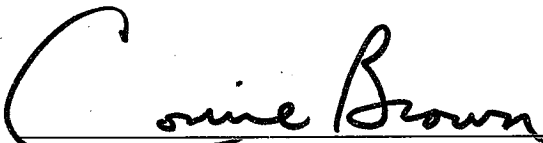
Rep. Howard Berman



Rep. Leonard Boswell



Rep. Rick Boucher



Rep. Corrine Brown



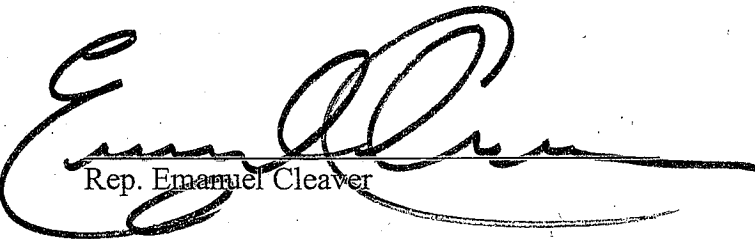
Rep. Lois Capps



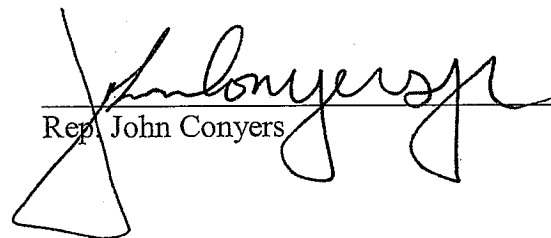
Rep. Michael Capuano



Rep. Russ Carnahan




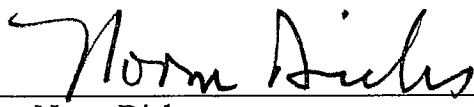
Rep. Emanuel Cleaver

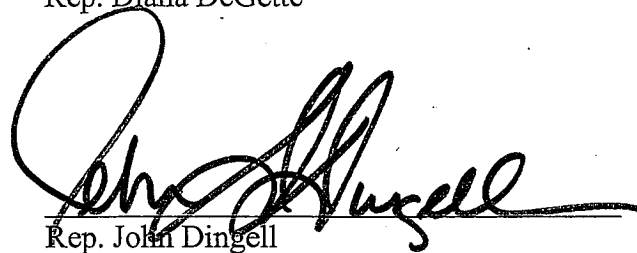


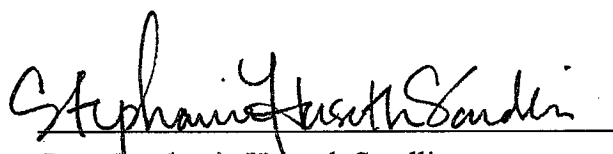
Rep. John Conyers

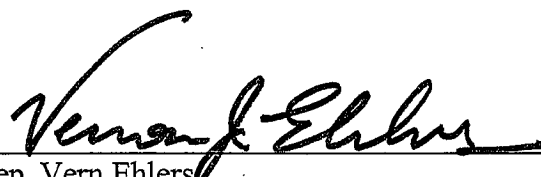

Rep. Peter DeFazio


Rep. Diana DeGette

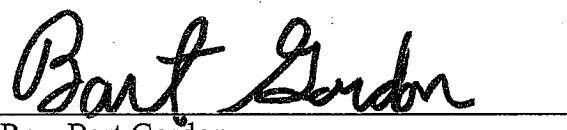

Rep. Norm Dicks

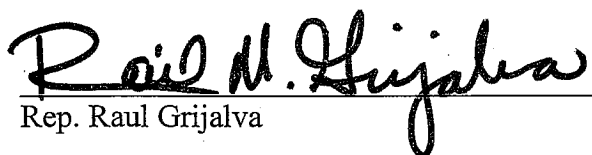

Rep. John Dingell

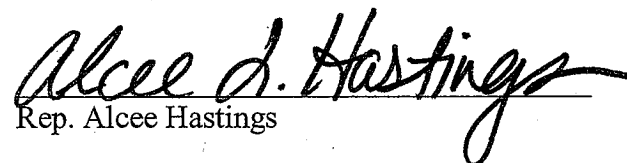

Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin

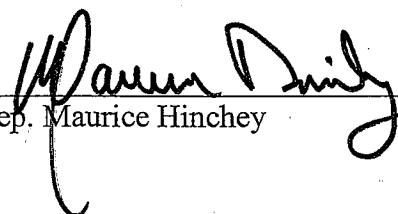

Rep. Vern Ehlers



Rep. Dan Boren


Rep. Bart Gordon


Rep. Raul Grijalva

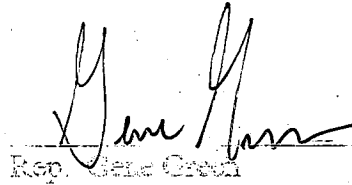

Rep. Alcee Hastings


Rep. Maurice Hinchey

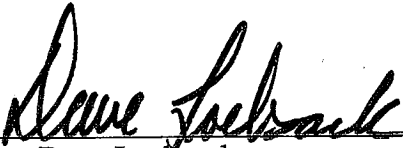

Rep. Dale Kildee



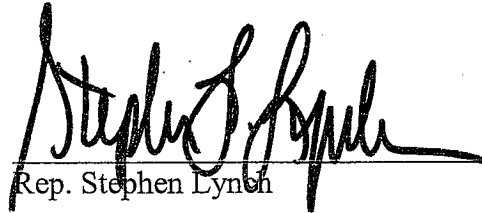
Rep. Ron Kind



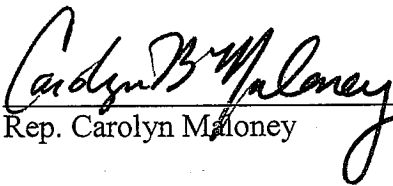
Rep. Gene Green



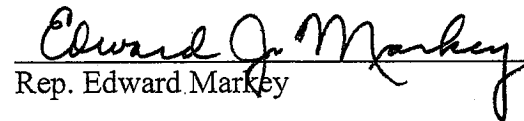
Rep. Dave Loebsack



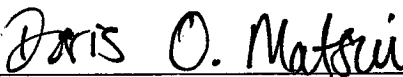
Rep. Stephen Lynch



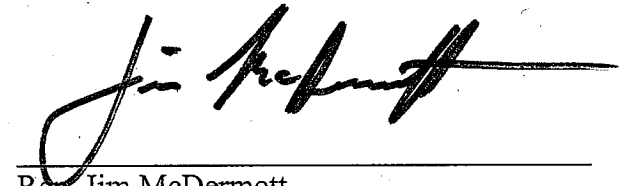
Rep. Carolyn Maloney



Rep. Edward Markey



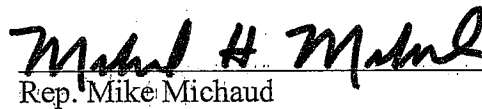
Rep. Doris Matsui



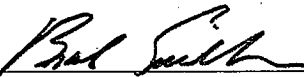
Rep. Jim McDermott



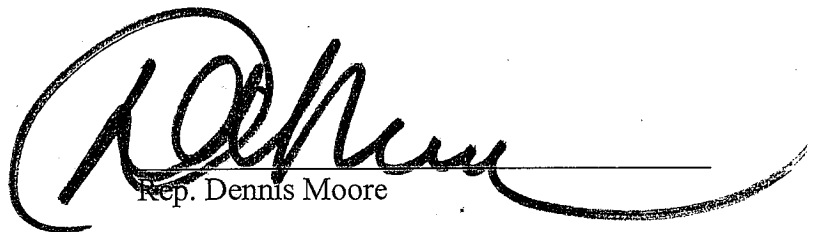
Rep. Mike McIntyre



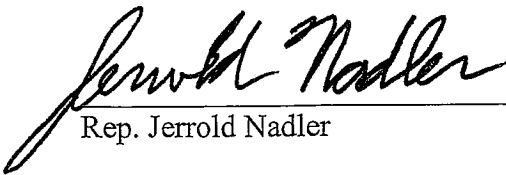
Rep. Mike Michaud

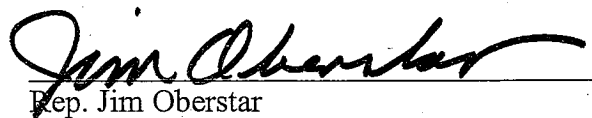


Rep. Brad Miller



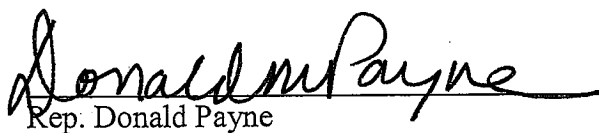
Rep. Dennis Moore

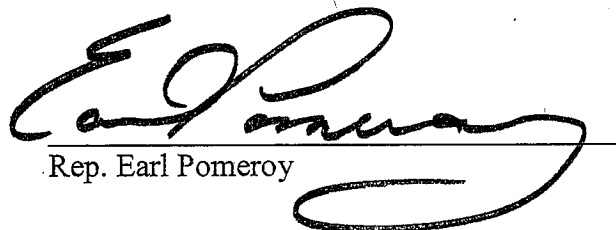

Rep. Jerrold Nadler


Rep. Jim Oberstar

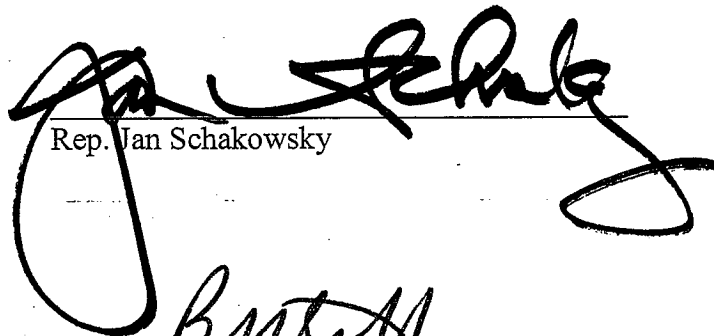

Rep. Frank Pallone

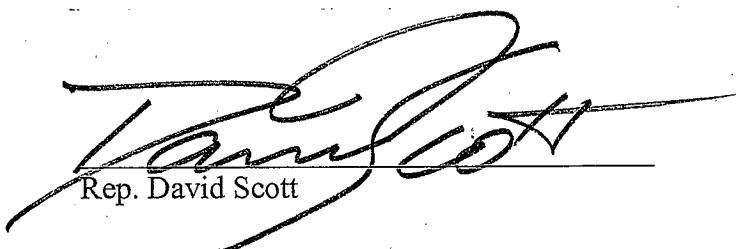

Rep. Bill Pascrell



Rep. Donald Payne

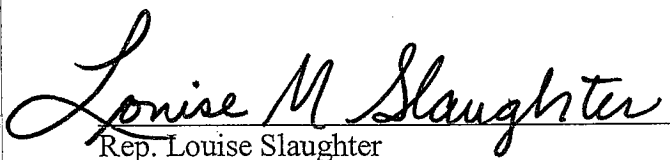

Rep. Earl Pomeroy

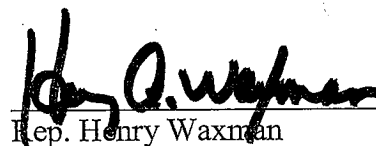

Rep. Mike Ross

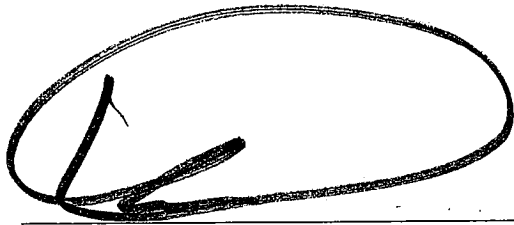

Rep. Jan Schakowsky


Rep. David Scott

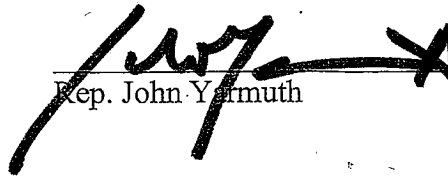

Rep. Robert Scott


Rep. Louise Slaughter

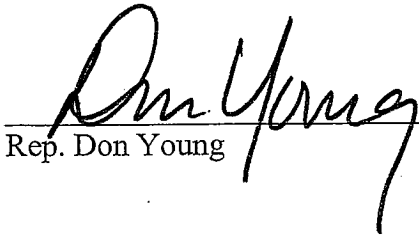

Rep. Henry Waxman



Rep. David Wu



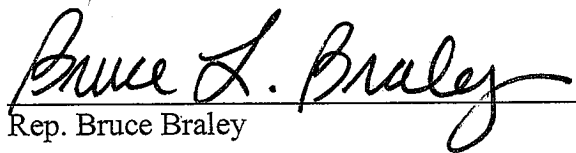
Rep. John Yarmuth



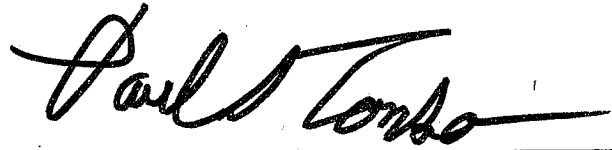
Rep. Don Young



Rep. Eric Massa



Rep. Bruce Braley



Rep. Paul Tonko



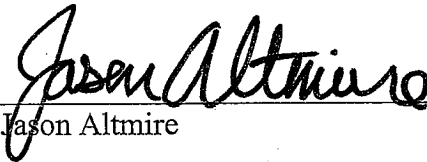
Rep. Phil Hare



Rep. Collin Peterson



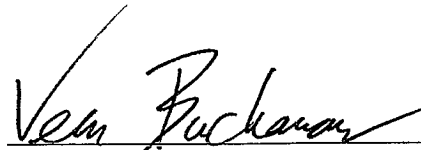
Rep. Charlie Rangel



Rep. Jason Altmire



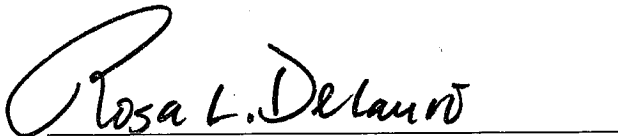
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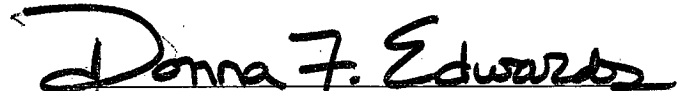


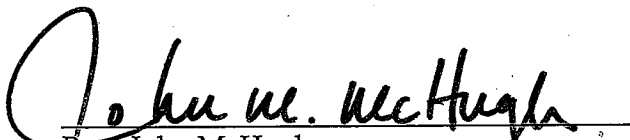
Rep. Vern Buchanan

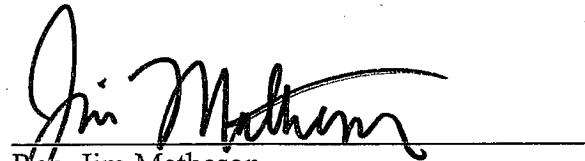

Rep. Jim McGovern

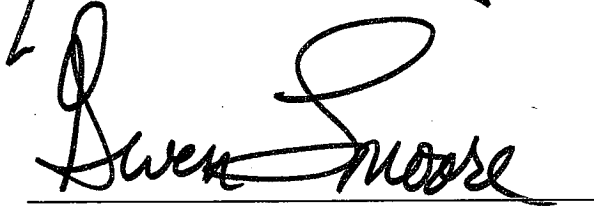

Rep. Peter King


Rep. Rosa DeLauro



Rep. Donna Edwards

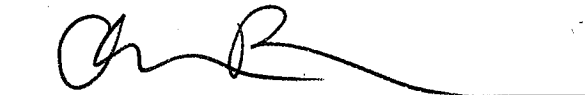

Rep. John McHugh

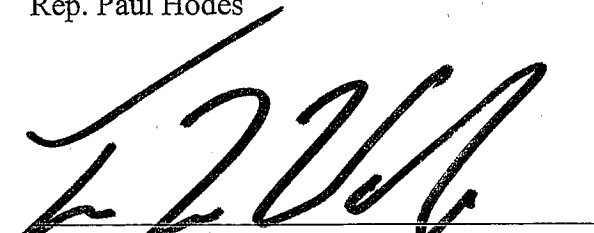

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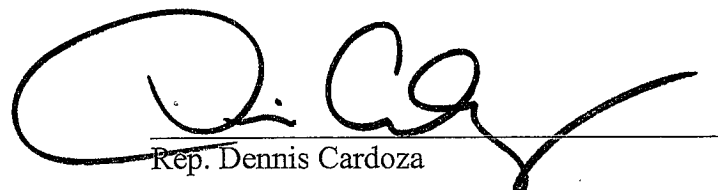

Rep. Gwen Moore


Rep. Elijah Cummings


Rep. Paul Hodes


Rep. Chellie Pingree


Rep. Tim Walz

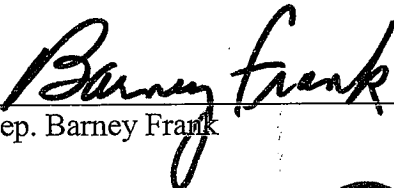

Rep. Dennis Cardoza



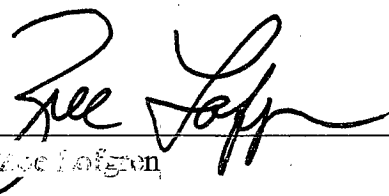
Rep. Jerry McNerney



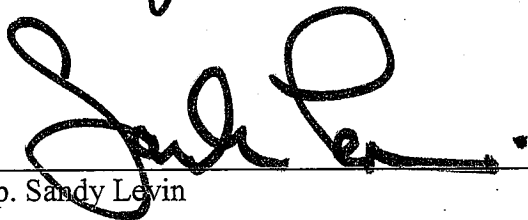
Rep. Carol Shea-Porter



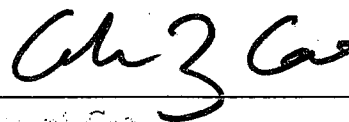
Rep. Barney Frank



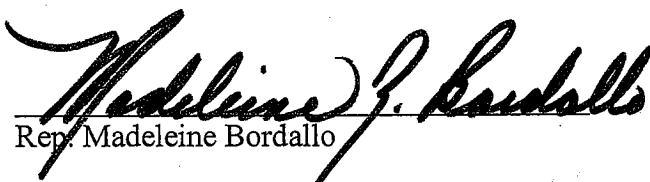
Rep. Joe Loignon



Rep. Sandy Levin



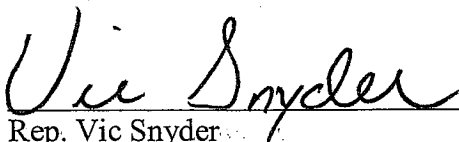
Rep. Joseph Cao



Rep. Madeleine Bordallo



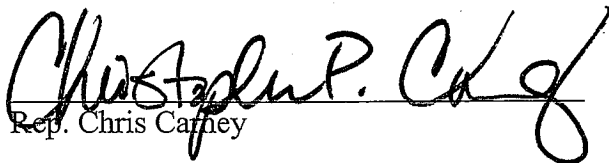
Rep. Michael Arcuri



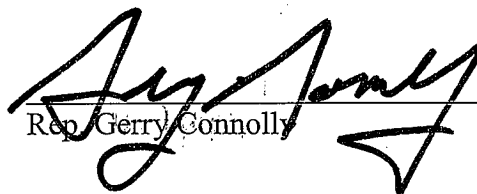
Rep. Vic Snyder



Rep. Yvette Clarke

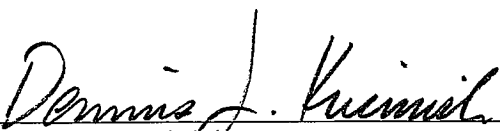


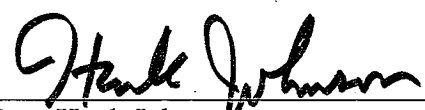
Rep. Chris Carney



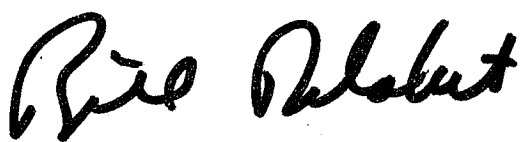
Rep. Gerry Connolly

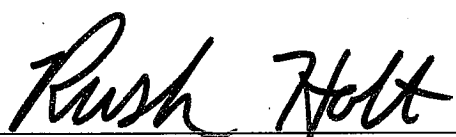



Rep. Dennis Kucinich

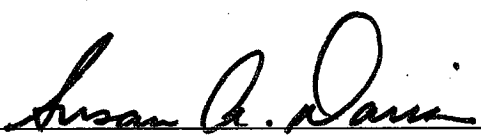

Rep. Hank Johnson

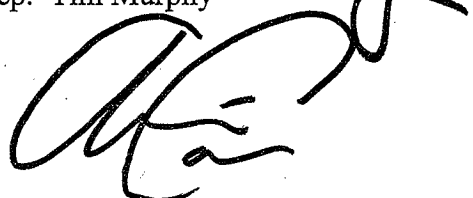

Rep. Todd Russell Platts

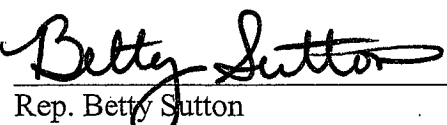

Rep. William Delahunt


Rep. Rush Holt

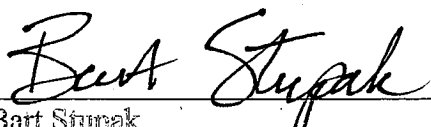

Rep. Tim Murphy


Rep. Susan Davis

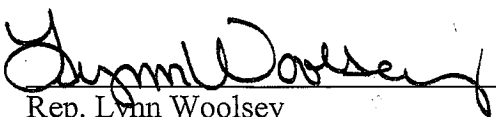

Rep. Andre Carson

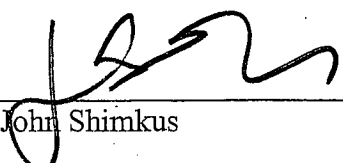

Rep. Betty Sutton


Rep. Michael Doyle


Rep. Bart Stupak


Rep. Gary Peters


Rep. Lynn Woolsey


Rep. John Shimkus

George Miller
Rep. George Miller

Maxine Waters
Rep. Maxine Waters

Melvin D. Watt
Rep. Mel Watt

Steve Kagen
Rep. Steve Kagen

Tim V. Johnson
Rep. Tim Johnson

D. Reichert
Rep. Dave Reichert